

6 June 1960

Honorable J. W. Fulbright/  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Fulbright:

I wish to confirm the word which I had passed on to you orally that I consider that it is unwise to release the testimony which I gave in Executive Session on Tuesday, 7 May, before the Committee on Foreign Relations on the U-2 incident.

I have reached this conclusion not so much because of the actual content of the testimony itself, - although a part of the question and answer section would have to be deleted for reasons of security, - but because of the precedent established.

In the past I have consistently taken the position that when I give testimony which is related to the intelligence operations of the Central Intelligence Agency, such testimony should not be subject to release. This is a matter of principle to protect the Agency and is consonant with the terms of the legislation creating the Agency which places upon me the responsibility "for protecting intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure".

The precedent of non-disclosure of such testimony has been consistently followed since the Agency was established and I feel that it is in the national interest that it should be adhered to in this instance. If this precedent should here be broken down, serious problems would be created for the future.

I trust that you will concur that this decision is a wise one.

(EXECUTIVE DECISION)

*Concurrence*

During the course of my testimony Senator Gore requested me to disclose to the Committee the particular intelligence objectives which were to be covered by the flight which was authorized on April 30th. I have given this matter most careful consideration and have consulted, as I said I would, with others. As a result I have concluded that it is not in the national interest to go further than the testimony given in which I indicated the basic objectives sought by the program and gave certain reasons for the urgency of obtaining that information.

Each and every flight had certain precise intelligence objectives, generally based on collateral information as to vitally important targets. This was particularly true with regard to the May 1 flight. I do not consider that it is consonant with the national interest to give further precise details with respect to the objectives of this flight.

I would appreciate it if you would kindly advise Senator Gore of my feelings in this regard.

Faithfully yours,

Allen W. Dulles  
Director

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

The attached letter to Senator J. W. Fulbright, dated  
6 June 1960, was prepared by the Director (with   
present) and coordinated with the following:

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On Sunday, 5 June, 12:30 p.m., the Director, accompanied  
by Mr. Richard Bissell, saw Secretary Herter.

On Monday, 6 June, the Director read the letter over the  
telephone to Mr. Edward McCabe, Administrative Assistant to  
the President, who concurred in the letter, and mentioned he had  
discussed the matter with General Persons and General Goodpaster.

On Tuesday, 7 June, Mr. John Warner, Legislative Counsel,  
hand-carried the letter to Senator Fulbright.

A copy of the letter was then sent to:

The Secretary of State  
The Secretary of Defense  
Mr. Edward McCabe, Admin. Asst. to the President

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